

Title 6: Economic Development

Part 4: Community Services

Part 4 Chapter 1: Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program (SMLPC)

Rule 1.1 Purpose. The Mississippi Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program (SMLPC), administered by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), is designed for making grants to small municipalities and limited population counties or natural gas districts (“Local Sponsors”) to finance projects to promote economic growth in the State of Mississippi (“State”). Funding for grants to Local Sponsors is derived from appropriations or funds otherwise made available by the State Legislature.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008).

Rule 1.2 Selection Priorities. The mission of the Mississippi Development Authority is “To foster a strong state economy and vibrant communities through innovation, use of talent and resources to improve our citizens’ lives.”

- A. The selection process will provide priority consideration to those applications that directly relate to the agency mission of fostering a strong economy and vibrant communities. MDA will prioritize applications that promote private sector permanent non-construction job creation and/or retention and promote private sector capital investment.
- B. Community projects that have a jurisdiction-wide benefit will be prioritized over projects that simply serve a confined portion of the community.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.3 Eligibility. A small municipality or a limited population county must submit an application to MDA. An eligible municipality, county and gas district is defined as follows:

- A. Small Municipality: a municipality with a population of 10,000 or less, according to the most recent federal decennial census, at the time the application is submitted by the municipality. The term “small municipality” also includes a municipal historical hamlet as defined in Section 17-27-5 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.
- B. Limited Population County: a county with a population of 30,000 or less, according to the most recent federal decennial census, at the time the application is submitted by the municipality.
- C. Natural Gas Districts: districts created by law and meeting the same requirements as small municipalities.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.4 Eligible Projects. Eligible projects financed with Mississippi Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program funds must be publicly owned. All contracts and purchases must be made in accordance with normal bid and purchase laws of a municipality or

county. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to: Eligible publicly owned projects according to program selection priorities include, but are not limited to

- A. Priority 1: Economic development-related improvements to include water, sewer, street and drainage improvements for the benefit of site development, industrial parks, business districts, tourism destinations, and projects that improve the competitiveness of a community.
- B. Priority 2: Downtown improvements to include: sidewalks, lighting, façade improvements, beautification improvements (waste receptacles, stop signs, street signs, landscaping, awnings, etc.), and other downtown improvements as approved by MDA.
- C. Priority 3: Non-economic development related water, sewer, street and drainage improvements.
- D. Priority 4: Purchase, construction or rehabilitation of public buildings to include: town halls, libraries, police stations, fire stations, community centers, courthouses, other publicly owned buildings as approved by MDA.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.5 Restrictions. SMLPC funds may not be used for working capital, for general expenditures, which would normally be covered under a local sponsor's general operation budget, or for project related soft costs such as administrative, engineering, architectural, inspection, legal, etc. . . expenses. SMLPC projects may not start prior to Grant Agreements being awarded. MDA will not pay for ad valorem taxes on any SMLPC projects. All contracts and purchases must be made in accordance with normal bid and purchase laws of a municipality or county.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.6 Competition. The SMLPC Program is a competitive program. As such, all funds awarded must be spent for improvements within the scope of the original project description as stated in the grant application. Additionally, if grant recipients complete their project for less than the grant amount awarded, the excess funds can be requested for additional project work as long as there is no change from the scope of the original project. In no case, however, will an approved applicant be allowed to use excess grant funds to pay for project costs that vary from the original project description.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.7 Changes to Original Application. All requested changes and variances from the original application should be made in writing and will be reviewed by MDA on a case-by-case basis.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.8 Application to the Program. To apply for the Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program, a completed application that is submitted by a Local Sponsor must include:

- A. Purpose of the proposed grant including a list of eligible items and the cost of each and explain how the proposed project relates to Economic Development/Community Development priority/master plan;
- B. The estimated cost of the total project, a description of the Local Sponsor's investment in the project, and all public or private sources of funding that have been secured and that will be utilized exclusively for the project;
- C. Time schedule for implementation and completion of the project, evidencing an expeditious completion of the project;
- D. Engineering documentation (must be on the engineer's letterhead, with his stamp/seal and signature);
- E. Current employment levels at the project site and estimated increase, if any, as a result of financing the project;
- F. Executed copy of the Local Sponsor's resolution of authorization to apply for grant funds (Mayor/President of Board of Supervisors); and
- G. Executed copy of the Local Sponsor's resolution committing matching funds to the project, if applicable;
- H. One (1) original of the application must be submitted to the Community Services Division of MDA, Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program, Post Office Box 849, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 or hand-delivered to the 5th floor of the Woolfolk Office Building.
- I. It should be noted that the Executive Director of "MDA" might in his discretion commit grant funds to projects prior to the application deadline. Such commitments would be made only if a specific project is involved and timing of the grant award would have a direct effect on the location or expansion of the project.
- J. The complete application must be submitted in a legal- sized dark blue classification folder (2 dividers) and each section bottom tabbed. All documentation must have original signatures and original pictures. This application should not be modified from its original format. Any application that does not contain information sufficient to permit review will not be considered for funding.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.9 General Grant Terms.

- A. The program intent is to stimulate growth and economic development in small communities in the State. Each application will be evaluated on its own merit to meet the intent of the program.
- B. The project must be related to MDA eligible priorities.
- C. The maximum grant amount, which may be awarded to any one Local Sponsor, will be \$150,000.
- D. Applications will be due by June 18, 2015 by 4:00 pm, MDA time.
- E. Communities with a population of 3,500 or less will be required to have at least a 10% match. The 10% match does not have to be cash only. Documented project related soft costs such as administrative, engineering, architectural, inspection, legal, etc . . . are acceptable match requirements.
- F. Communities with a population greater than 3,500 will be required to have at least a 20% match. The 20% match does not have to be cash only. Documented project related

softs costs such as administrative, engineering, architectural, inspection, legal, etc . . . are acceptable for match requirements.

G. If a community has any open SMLPC grants they are not eligible to submit another application. In addition, if the open SMLPC grant is not at least 50% expended at the time of application submittal, then they are not eligible to submit. An acceptable close-out package must be submitted before submitting an application.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.10 Conditions for Disbursement of Funds.

- A. A Grant Agreement will be executed between the Local Sponsor and MDA. A grant agreement must be signed before request for cash can be processed.
- B. All funds will flow through the Local Sponsor.
- C. MDA will release SMLPC Program funds on a reimbursement basis, for approved eligible costs of the project.
- D. The municipality or county shall certify to MDA during construction that the expenses were incurred and were in accordance with the application approved by MDA.
- E. Funds will be released upon receipt of the SMLPC Program Request for Cash and supporting documentation from the local unit of government.
- F. The municipality or county have two years from the date of the award to expend the funds under the SMLPC Program.
- G. Failure to implement and complete the project may result in the grant being voided and funds de-obligated.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.11 Reimbursement Process. MDA will release SMLPC program funds for services rendered or on a reimbursement basis for approved eligible costs of the project as incurred. The Local Sponsor shall certify to MDA during construction that the expenses were incurred and were in accordance with the plans and application approved by MDA. Funds will be released upon receipt of the SMLPC Program Form of Requisition and supporting documentation from the Local Sponsor. Funds may only be drawn down once a month. Local Sponsors have two (2) years from the date of the Grant Agreement to request reimbursement for SMLPC project costs.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.12 Business Participation/Outreach. The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), Community Services Division (CSD) encourages maximum opportunity for increased participation by local Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE/WBE) in the procurement of goods and services. The Mississippi Development Authority Minority Business Division at www.mississippi.org and the Mississippi Procurement Technical Center at www.mspsc.com can assist with MBE/WBE outreach efforts.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.13 Audit/Monitoring. Funds provided under the Small Municipalities and Limited Population Grant Program are subject to audit by the State Department of Audit. Additionally, MDA will also monitor all projects to ensure compliance with the original application submitted.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008).

Rule 1.14 Waiver. These guidelines may be amended by MDA at any time. MDA, in its discretion, may temporarily waive any requirement of the guidelines to the extent that the result of such waiver is to promote the public purpose of the Act and is not prohibited by State law.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 57-1-18 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 1.15 Additional Information.

- A. Mississippi Development Authority
The Small Municipalities and Limited Population Counties Grant
Community Services Division
Attn: Patricia Turner
Post Office Box 849
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
Telephone: (601) 359-9316/Fax: (601) 359-3108